



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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State begins trapping program for European grapevine moth, 3 other pest moths

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) announced today it has begun a program looking for destructive moths with potential to damage the state's grape and fruit industries. Traps will be set for the European grapevine moth, light brown apple moth, silver Y moth, and false codling moth, but the focus this summer will be on the European grapevine moth.

Up to 1,500 grapevine moth traps will be placed around the state by mid-July, according to Mike Klaus, WSDA's pest survey coordinator for Eastern Washington. Traps will be placed in each of the 11 major wine grape growing regions. Klaus said the traps will be checked every two-to-four weeks during the summer and then taken down in September.

The European grapevine moth was found for the first time in the U.S. last September in Napa Valley. The grapevine moth is considered a serious threat to California's \$18 billion wine industry. After its initial detection in Napa Valley, the pest has been found in five other grape-growing counties, and now more than 30,000 moths have been detected. Some California growing regions are already under quarantine, and almost \$5 million in state and federal funds have been spent to fight the grapevine moth.

Klaus emphasized the grapevine moth has not been detected in Washington. "But we want to be able to prove we don't have it here," Klaus said. "If the grapevine moth were to become established in Washington, it could pose a serious threat to the state's grape-growing and wine industries."

If grapevine moths are found, state agriculture officials will place more traps in the area in an attempt to find the center of the infestation. Officials say they would also consult immediately with state and federal agencies to determine the best course of action, as well as reach out to industry stakeholders.

"We're happy to be partnering with WSDA in staying on top of this and other potentially damaging pests and diseases," said Vicky Scharlau, executive director, Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers.

Washington is the second-largest grape-growing state in the U.S. and number two producer of premium wines with nearly 700 licensed wineries.

Washington's 11 major grape regions are the Yakima Valley, Walla Walla Valley, Columbia Valley, Puget Sound, Red Mountain near Benton City, Columbia Gorge south of Goldendale, Horse Heaven Hills near Prosser, Wahluke Slope near Mattawa, Rattlesnake Hills near Zillah, Snipes Mountain near Sunnyside, and Lake Chelan.

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WSDA's current trap and detection programs include gypsy moth, apple maggot, sudden oak death, spartina, Mediterranean snail and Japanese beetle—all done to protect the Evergreen State's environment and to safeguard the agriculture, horticulture, nursery, timber and forest industries.

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